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In life there comes new seasons, yet our God always remains the same. I felt it was important to summarise what work and ministry is looking like for me now and how things have changed and what has stayed the same.



The new

As you may be aware my husband and I have moved 2.5 hours out of Cape Town and bought a small holding in a remote farming village.

There is not much in our village except a small cafe, a pub and a bottle store. A typical problem in South African farming communities is substance misuse. It is a normal scene on a Friday afternoon to have a crowd of farm workers (after they've received their weekly pay) outside the bottle store. Unfortunately, substance abuse usually goes hand in hand with physical abuse and a whole array of other things. I too often hear horrific stories of things that have been happening to the adults and

something productive to do with their lives.

Although we are in a new setting, there are so many polarities to the trauma in this village that I saw in the Cape Flats. I am able to use my six years of experience working there and apply it in this current context.

I love the moto that comes from an organisation I worked with in Cape Town. It talks about a hand up, not a hand out. This is what I hope to bring with my ministry and skills. A hand up in life and a hand up to God.

Women's Ministry

I am still involved with the some of the women's ministry in the Cape Flats, however, I have managed to equip some of the ladies from the church there, who help run the yearly weekend away. It is a joy to see them organising and putting on events throughout the year to minister to the ladies and bring hope and healing into their lives both emotionally and spiritually. I can't be in all places at the same time, and I realised a couple of years ago that I would benefit more people if I train and equip others. It is wonderful to have these ladies continue to minister to the women, and I look forward to us all being together again in February next year, for our yearly weekend away, with which we are busy making plans for.

Let me know if you would like to donate £80 to sponsor one of the women so they can go along.

The ladies are still sewing and currently have a project repairing damaged stock from a big clothing company. Some of the machines have been left with them, and they have set up a sewing workshop in one of their homes. This makes it much easier for them to access and they can do it at whatever hours suits them, instead of having to get access to the church at set times. This lady (pictured right) is also busy doing lots of repairs for people and getting an income for that.





living. I am looking to find a venue to keep them and set up a women's ministry here, so I can invest in a new group of women's lives emotionally, practically and spiritually.

Children's Ministry.

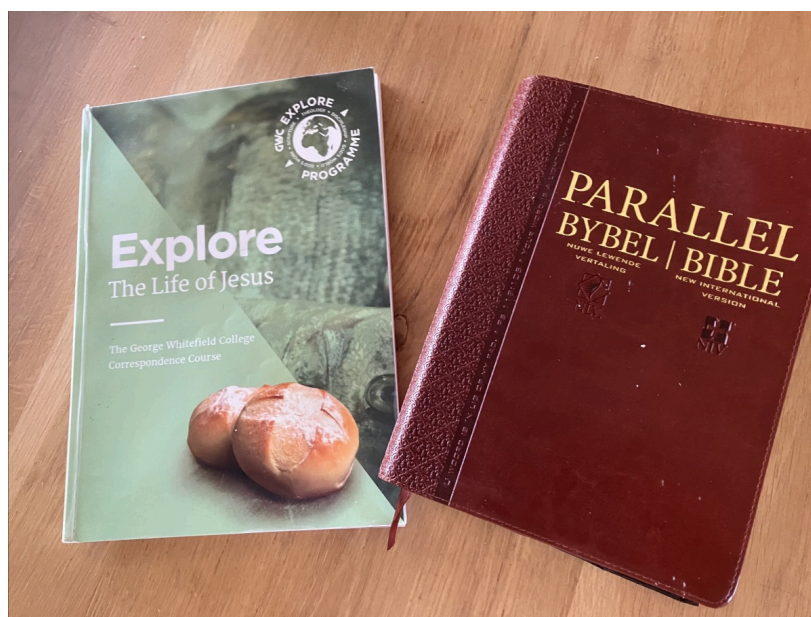


I have finished working with all the children I was in Cape Town and have set up a children's after school club in our village. There are many underprivileged children here. I am amazed that the children know nothing about God and the bible. One of the children who can read was delighted when I gave him a bible. It is a joy and privilege to be able to teach them from the beginning about who God is and spend time connecting and playing with them. I see the same patterns of when I was working in the Cape Flats of broken families, lots of trauma, poverty and hardship.

Church

we could see there was a big gap. Our Sunday morning bible study we've been running since Easter fills me with so much joy as we delve into the bible together. We are almost at the end of doing a bible overview and have had such great discussions, debates and questions answered as we've journeyed through the bible together. We have people from all walks of life, experiences and ability. One lady is unable to read, but despite this, she avidly listens each week and takes in the stories and message. Others have read the passages before, yet new light is shed for them as they go deeper in their walk with God. Some have recently been challenged about what discipleship means and how they too can be doing this in the village.

Our next set of studies will be exploring the life of Jesus.



Training and equipping

Our long term vision is to build a retreat space on our property. We know this is going to take time and money but we are trusting that if this is right, then the Lord will provide the way. We've already seen God's hand at work in things providing money and direction. Plus we have a meeting with a potential funder next week. We would love to use the space for me to run trainings and for Christian workers to come, ideally before they burn out, to have a time of rest and to be better equipped for their ministry. South Africa has been likened to that of a war zone, which can make it extremely difficult to live in a calm and peaceful state. There is so much trauma and hardship, and wherever you find yourself ministering, you easily get caught up in people's struggles and difficulties alongside the daily battles of keeping oneself safe.



My husband was telling me recently that he grew up in a middle class suburb, their house was burgled three times when he was a child. At the time of the 1994 elections, they as a white family would be shot if the ANC won the election. He had the wheels of his first car stolen and numerous vehicles stolen growing up. This is an example of a typical South African's experience. Everyone is living in a heightened state of fear and trauma.

I find that numerous Christian Workers have suffered a lot of trauma and hardship themselves and many do not have the training to even realise they are living with trauma, let alone know how to deal with other people's. The word burnout, is a buzz word I hear time and again. I am continuing to run training and workshops in Cape Town and elsewhere. Then as we have the facilities available, I will be expanding things to help deal with this issue, so that people can be equipped and prepared to bring the gospel to those around them with energy and enthusiasm rather than being deflated and overwhelmed.

For Your Prayers

Praise God:

- For the ministry I can see happening in the village we have moved to.
- That through my ministry I have been able to equip and inspire others to bring women together and encourage them with Gods word.
- For the conversations and learnings that people are having in our bible study group and how they feel challenged to also be discipling others.

Please Pray:

- That we can be a light and good witness in our village.

- For the kids after school club that the children would continue to have a hunger for the gospel and learn more about God and the bible. Pray that more children from the village would come along.
- Pray for the boy I gave a bible to that he would be reading it at home.
- That I can find someone to do the bible talks for our women's retreat next year.
- For the funding meeting we have for a potential sponsor for our retreat space.
- That we would continually seek the Lord in all we are doing.

Do keep in touch and let me know how you are.

Warm wishes

Sarah, Gavin and Noa



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